

BCDC SAFEGUARDING POLICY



Urgent concerns

If you are contacting BCDC from outside the organisation and you wish to report an urgent safeguarding concern, please contact info@britishcompetitors.co.uk

Key Contacts

Secretary – Olga Elsbury

1. Our Policy

1.1. Policy Statement

The BCDC believes that all children and vulnerable adults, regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation or socio-economic background, have the right to be protected from abuse, neglect or exploitation. We believe that the welfare and interests of children and vulnerable adults is paramount in all circumstances. BCDC acknowledges that some children and vulnerable adults such as those with disabilities, those who have been displaced and those who hold refugee status, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

BCDC recognises that as an organisation we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and vulnerable adults and to keep them safe. All individuals who represent BCDC, these include staff, volunteers and those working for affiliated civil society organisations, have a responsibility to raise any concerns they have or any concerns which are reported to them according to this policy. These concerns include those relating to the unsafe or abusive conduct of individuals who represent BCDC towards children or vulnerable adults. It is the responsibility of BCDC's EC, to ensure that safeguarding concerns are managed sensitively, proportionately and in accordance to this policy and relevant legislative guidance.

The policy and procedures described in this document will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved with BCDC. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

1.2. Definitions

1.2.1. Child / Young Person

A child is defined as anyone who has not reached the age of 18. This definition is recognised internationally as identifying a population who are particularly vulnerable and require additional safeguards to protect their rights.

1.2.2. Vulnerable Adults / Adults at Risk

An adult at risk is “any person aged 18 years and over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental health issues, learning or physical disability, sensory impairment, or unable to protect themselves due to age or illness and who may be unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or serious exploitation”. (Department for Health and Social Care, UK: ‘No Secrets: Guidance on Protecting Vulnerable Adults in Care’)

Since 2005, the range of adults considered to be at risk has been widened to include people encountering domestic abuse, substance misusers and asylum seekers.

An adult at risk of abuse or neglect is defined as someone who has needs for care and support, who is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect and as a result of their care needs is unable to protect themselves.

Safeguarding vulnerable adults is defined in the Care and support statutory guidance issued under the Care Act 2014 as:

- protecting the rights of adults to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.
- people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect.
- people and organisations making sure that the adult’s wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, taking fully into account their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action.
- recognising that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent or unclear about their personal circumstances and therefore potential risks to their safety or well-being.

1.2.3. Safeguarding

Safeguarding children is the process of protecting children and vulnerable adults from abuse or neglect and impairment of their health and development, ensuring they are living in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

Safeguarding adults at risk is the process of protecting adults from abuse or neglect, enabling adults to maintain control over their lives and make informed choices without coercion. It involves empowering adults at risk, consulting them before taking action. If someone lacks the capacity to make a decision, or their mental health poses a risk to their own or someone else’s safety, any action taken should always be in his or her best interests.

1.2.4 Mental Capacity

For the purposes of Safeguarding Adults, mental capacity is an individual’s ability to:

- Understand the implications of their situation and risk to themselves.
- Take action themselves to prevent abuse.
- Participate in decision making about interventions involving them.
- All individuals should be supported to participate to the fullest extent possible in decision making about interventions involving them, be they life changing events or everyday matters.

1.2.5 Types of Abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child/vulnerable adult. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child/vulnerable adult by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse may be

perpetrated by anybody. Perpetrators of abuse can be family members, other children and vulnerable adults or professionals. This includes those who work for BCDC as either an employee, volunteer or on behalf of BCDC for a civil society organisation. Offences are committed by females as well as males.

BCDC recognises that abuse may take many forms including, but not limited to:

- Physical Abuse. Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm.
- Emotional Abuse. Emotional abuse is the ongoing emotional maltreatment of someone. It may involve conveying to someone that they are worthless or unloved.
- Sexual Abuse. Sexual abuse is when a person is forced or manipulated to take part in sexual activities when they do not or cannot fully consent to them. This does not have to include activities where people touch one another, it can involve for example, forcing someone to watch sexual content or take naked pictures of themselves.
- Neglect. Neglect happens when a person needs someone else to help take care of them. Neglect is when that person is not looked after properly. Children need people to look after them until they become adults and some adults need somebody to care for them if they have a disability or are unwell.
- Exploitation. Exploitation is when somebody or a group of people take advantage of the power, they have over someone to get them to do things. Exploitation happens when one person or group has more power than another person or group. The person or group abuse their power to get those with less power to do things they might, in other circumstances, not agree to do.

BCDC recognises that abuse, neglect and other safeguarding issues are not always standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. It is possible that if a child or vulnerable adult is experiencing abuse, their experiences may fit into more than one of these categories.

It is recognised that BCDC operates with communities where staff and volunteers may command greater control or have greater access to resources when compared to beneficiaries. This power imbalance can be used to exploit beneficiaries. Exploitation of beneficiaries is a form of abuse which should always be raised as a safeguarding concern. BCDC have a zero-tolerance approach to the exploitation of beneficiaries by their staff and volunteers.

2. Applicability

This policy applies to all staff, committee members and volunteers of BCDC irrespective of their role or contract type and any person or organisation working on our behalf. Affiliated civil society organisations are expected to meet minimum similar standards as those outlined in this document, and have these reflected in their own policies and procedures. A risk assessment of the safeguarding policies within these organisations must be completed to ensure they meet these standards. A copy of this risk assessment can be found at Appendix 2.

3. Responsibilities

BCDC believes that the responsibility for safeguarding is shared by everyone working and volunteering with us, but with a clear leadership and accountability structure running through the organisation.

- Executive Committee: reviews and approves the Safeguarding Policy annually meeting and the responsibility for safeguarding will reside with the Secretary.

- All staff (core, temporary, contracted and volunteers): are responsible for ensuring that the welfare of participants remains paramount in all that we do. Raise concerns as they arise and follow the BCDC constitution.

4. Managing Concerns and Disclosures

All concerns and allegations will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. BCDC recognises that whilst some incidents and allegations will require the support and / or intervention of external agencies, others may be supported through existing internal support mechanisms.

4.1. Procedure

The procedure for raising safeguarding concerns is as follows:

4.1.1 Reporting by Beneficiaries

If a beneficiary is concerned about their own welfare or that of another beneficiary there are multiple methods of reporting. They can raise their concern:

- To a member of staff or volunteer who they are working with
- By email to info@britishcompetitors.co.uk

4.1.2 Reporting by Staff or Volunteers

If a member of staff or volunteer has a concern about the welfare of a beneficiary, they must:

- Consider the immediate safety and welfare of the child/vulnerable person
- Not investigate or question the child/vulnerable person.
- Only ask questions to get enough information to understand the complaint (e.g. 'who, what, where, when' questions, but not 'why' questions). Keep calm and act normally; do not say or show that you are shocked.
- Never agree to keep a secret. If a child/vulnerable person is in danger you will have to inform others.
- Not directly challenge related adults or children about your concerns.
- Record all the details that support your suspicion. Within 24 hours report your concern

4.4. Information Sharing and Confidentiality

Data protection legislation is not a barrier to sharing reasonable safeguarding concerns. Those representing BCDC as staff or volunteers cannot keep confidences when they involve concerns about a child or vulnerable adult. Any information offered in confidence to BCDC staff or volunteers, relating to risks or concerns about a child or vulnerable adult, should be received on the basis that it will have to be shared with the relevant person or people in authority.

4.1.4 Internal Response

Within 72 hours of receiving a complaint or concern, BCDC will acknowledge receipt of the concern and initiate the procedures for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. An email should be sent to the complainant acknowledging the complaint as soon as possible. BCDC must refer suspected cases of abuse to local statutory authorities where possible. Confidentiality must be maintained throughout the complaints process by all staff and witnesses. Staff members who breach confidentiality will be subject to disciplinary action. In some cases, such breaches constitute breaking the law.

5. Learning, Monitoring and Review

BCDC will continually review and evaluate its Safeguarding practice. We will evaluate, analysing safeguarding data and trends, and identifying any key areas for improvement and headlines.

6. Supporting our Beneficiaries

6.1 Sharing Our Values

BCDC is a listening organisation that values feedback from its beneficiaries. We share with beneficiaries what they can expect from us as an organisation, our values and their rights in relation to our service. We provide several methods of raising concerns so that beneficiaries can communicate in a way that feels most comfortable to them. These methods are clearly communicated when beneficiaries access our services.

7. Supporting our Staff and Volunteers

7.1 Training and Code of Conduct

BCDC believes that staff and volunteers are able to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities more effectively by providing an effective induction and information for safeguarding can be found on the Sports England website www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/safeguarding

7.2 Code of Conduct

All individuals who represent BCDC, which includes staff, volunteers and those working for affiliated civil society organisations, are asked to adopt a professional code of conduct which adopts a moral compass of the standards of behaviour expected of them in their role. This includes conduct on social media platforms.

8. Allegations against staff and volunteers

Any allegation that a member of staff or volunteer has behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a participant, will be taken seriously and dealt with sensitively and promptly.